

Happiness 721

Chapter 721 Here To See Dexmed Pharmaceutical Lose

By then, Yara was all too aware that Samuel had no feelings for her.

If Natalie is still alive in this world, he'll never spare me a single glance. Even though he's here now, I'm sure he only came because of her!

"He's naturally here for Dream's sake," she muttered, seemingly answering Thomas, yet it was as though she was also reminding herself of it.

"Oh, well!"

At once, Thomas wore an utterly conflicted expression. On the one hand, he was afraid that Samuel would intervene during the press conference, but on the other, he found it a pity that the man had no affection for Yara. Otherwise, he would have free rein over the influence of the Bowers family. Consequently, the scale and accomplishments of Dexmed Pharmaceutical would reach new heights.

"There's no need to be nervous, Dad. So what if he's here? This matter can't be suppressed even if he intervenes. After all, it involves multiple lives. Not only did Dream fail to provide an explanation, but they didn't even apologize. No matter how much power he has, he can't run roughshod over the entire Dellmoor," Yara scoffed.

Nodding, Thomas put a lid on the uneasiness and anxiety within him.

When they both walked out to the press conference hall, they bumped into Samuel head-on.

"Hello, Samuel." Thomas acted all toady at the sight of Samuel, extending his hand for a handshake. Alas, the man ignored him.

In a flash, embarrassment showed on his face. Fortunately, the person in charge of the Medical Association at the side called out to him. Using that as an excuse, he brushed his nose and left with his tail between his legs.

That left Yara and Samuel standing face-to-face with each other.

Yara jerked her chin up arrogantly as she stared at Samuel. "Are you here to see how Dream is going to lose miserably? Otherwise, you really didn't have to come here today. If you're determined to help Natalie, your position as the head of the family will be shaky henceforth no matter how secure it has been."

The corners of Samuel's mouth curved into a faint arc.

That smile of his was both devilish and wicked.

The mole beneath his right eye added a dangerously entrancing allure to him, but the light in his upturned eyes was cold and dark. Opening his thin lips slightly, he riposted, "It's the polar opposite. I'm here to see how Dexmed Pharmaceutical is going to lose and make a run like rats fleeing a sinking ship."

Hearing that, Yara was startled, her eyes brimming with disbelief.

“What do you mean?”

However, Samuel deliberately ignored her shocked gaze and said to Billy beside him, “Let’s find a place and have a seat.”

“Sure,” Billy answered, inclining his head a fraction.

Subsequently, Samuel took his seat under Yara’s resentful gaze.

Her hands curled and clenched into fists. She felt like the man trampled all over her heart, shattering it into a million pieces.

Things have already come to this, yet he’s still unwilling to admit that Natalie has lost, huh? But so what? The facts are right before our eyes. Regardless of whether he’s here, the outcome will remain the same. Just you wait and see, Samuel! I’m definitely going to defeat her so soundly in this press conference that her reputation will be in tatters!

At ten o’clock on the dot, the press conference commenced.

The host stood at the rostrum and repeated high-sounding cliches.

Behind the screen, a tall and slender figure in a dark green vest stood among the staff, appearing very much inconspicuous. As she lowered the brim of her baseball cap, a smirk tugged at her lips. A moment later, a voice drifted out of her Bluetooth earpiece.

“Everything is ready, Boss.”

“Great.”

That figure was none other than Natalie, but she wasn’t wearing the hyper-realistic mask she usually wore.

Hence, even with the baseball cap concealing the better half of her face, it still couldn’t hide her devastating beauty.

After the host finished speaking, it was the experts’ turn, followed by the person in charge of the Medical Association.

The person in charge of the Medical Association, Saunder Todd, was a middle-aged man wearing gold-rimmed glasses. When he spoke, not only did he sound heartbroken, but he even burst into tears.

“I’m devastated, truly grief-stricken! Twenty-three patients and their families were affected! In my opinion, if we do not take action, many more patients and their families will be destroyed.”

Because of his persuasive words and expression, many soft-hearted female journalists at the press conference started shedding tears surreptitiously.

Chapter 722 The Tables Have Turned 1

“That’s why we must take the most drastic approach this time. We must boycott Dream Pharmaceutical in the name of the association and the pharmaceutical industry. I’ll not allow any tragedy to happen

again before we obtain credible findings from investigations. That's all I have to say!" As soon as Saunder finished his announcement, the crowd instantly responded with applause.

Thomas and Yara exchanged looks and smiled. They knew that Dream Pharmaceutical would fall from grace after this conference. There's nothing they can do even after obtaining credible findings from investigations! Dream Pharmaceutical would have a hard time making a comeback since its reputation would have been tarnished by the time they had completed the investigations.

The host then said in a serious voice, "Thank you for your speech, Mr. Todd. Next, we'll welcome Dexmed Pharmaceutical's CEO, Mr. Thomas Nichols, to deliver his speech."

A crew member passed the microphone over to Thomas.

Thomas cleared his throat and was about to deliver his speech. All of a sudden, everyone in the hall heard a screech that hurt their ears.

"What's going on? What's with the sharp noise from the microphone? Get someone to solve this problem right now!" Thomas' expression turned grim as he yelled, but the screech was so loud that no one could hear him.

The noise lasted for quite a while. Once the microphone stopped making those sharp noises, a technician walked up to Thomas to inspect the device.

The host felt awkward but tried to pull himself together. He attempted to distract the audience from the incident. Yet, his microphone failed to work too when he spoke into it.

"What's happening now? Everything was fine before this."

"How could they allow this kind of technical error to happen? Don't they know this is an important event?"

"This is ridiculous! It is going to affect the live stream viewership! What the hell, man!"

The journalists started grumbling as they could not believe that the organizer would make such a blunder.

While Yara looked in Thomas' direction, she had an ominous feeling about the situation. She felt as though something bad was going to happen.

She then turned her gaze to Samuel, who was sitting in the audience.

While everyone at the event was running around like headless chickens, Samuel remained inexplicably calm, as if the disruption did not affect him at all.

There was an air of aloofness about him, and a corner of his mouth seemed quirked up. It was as if he had seen this coming.

He's obviously waiting for the drama to unfold.

Wait. Drama? What drama?

Yara's eyes narrowed at that thought, and her heart started pounding. Does it have something to do with Natalie? Is she going to make a comeback? No. No way. That's impossible!

Suddenly, the sound system started functioning as usual again.

Thomas immediately took out a handkerchief to wipe away the sweat on his face. Laughing wryly, he was about to continue with his speech.

But before he could open his mouth, a voice had emerged from the sound system.

"Mr. Todd, I've emailed you the press statement. You just need to read it out accordingly."

"But..."

"Remember the exquisite vase that you had your eyes on? I've delivered it to your house. Just read the press statement as it is, don't worry. You're an influential figure in the industry, so it'll make a big difference if you're the one reading out the press statement. Once Dexmed Pharmaceutical acquires Dream Pharmaceutical, I'll transfer three percent of the shares to your name!"

Saunders could be heard laughing before he said, "All right! You can count on me. We might not have the official findings from the investigations, but the boycott announcement would be the death of Dream Pharmaceutical!"

"I'm sure you have the power to do that, Mr. Todd!"

The recording instantly sent the crowd into a frenzy.

All the journalists aimed their cameras at Thomas and Saunders.

"What's with this under-the-table deal between you and Mr. Nichols? Please explain!"

Chapter 723 The Tables Have Turned 2

At that moment, the color drained from Thomas' and Saunders' faces. As both men sat among the panel, they started breaking out in cold sweats.

"Erm..."

The Medical Association was supposed to represent all the pharmaceutical companies within the industry. Yet, the head of the association was now in cahoots with the leading pharmaceutical company, and the former was using his influence to gain personal benefits. How scandalous!

Right then, Thomas and Saunders exchanged meaningful glances. Both of them desperately wanted to know who leaked the recording.

Even Yara was confused by the turn of events. She knitted her brows and stared at Thomas. How could this happen when the press conference is about to end?

"Please explain yourself, Mr. Todd," the journalists urged.

"Someone must have doctored the recording to frame us!" Saunders had no choice but to make up a lie.

"Someone must be trying to use the opportunity to defame Dexmed Pharmaceutical and me!"

There's no way I'll admit to the things I've done!

Saunders knew the recording was real, but coming clean would ruin his reputation as the president of the Medical Association and cause him to lose everything.

Upon noticing Saunders's eye gesture, Thomas stepped in and said steadily, "What Mr. Todd said is correct. Someone made this up to defame us! We've worked so hard to support the enterprises and our patients, yet some people or certain enterprises feel that the good things we have done are against their interests. That is why they did this to bring us down!"

Some people?

Certain enterprises?

He did not say it out clearly, but every remark he made seemed to have insinuated that Dream Corporation, Natalie, and Yandel were the culprits behind this.

When Thomas realized the journalists had become less confrontational, he wiped the sweat off his forehead and regained his composure. "Dear members of the press and live stream viewers, Dexmed Pharmaceutical is a century-old company, and I've been working hard ever since I took over the business from my father-in-law, Mr. Arnold Bayer."

"I, Thomas Nichols, am not a hypocrite. Integrity and safety of the people have always been my priorities!" he added.

Thomas was a charismatic speaker, and the remarks he had won the journalists' and the crowd's hearts.

Meanwhile, a young woman, who was behind the stage, smirked disdainfully upon hearing what he said.

I see. Still trying to act, huh? After my granddad's passing, my mom and I fled to the countryside in desperation to save our lives. It wouldn't have happened if he hadn't plotted against us. How dare he put on an act to convince the world that he's a noble man?

The woman spoke into the Bluetooth earpiece, "Play another recording."

"Okay."

After Thomas ended his speech, the hall started playing another recording.

"Dear, I'm in love with the Rolls-Royce you gave me. My friends are very envious of me!"

"You'll be giving birth to my baby in another seven months, and he'll be my one and only son! I've had two wives in the past, but you're the best!"

The woman's labored breathing in the recording seemed to have hinted that she was having an intimate moment with Thomas.

She responded coquettishly, "So you're only treating me well because I'm going to give you a son? I thought you said you love me?"

"I love you, of course! I love you to the moon and back! You're my sweet darling!"

“When will you be marrying me then? Now that Yvonne is in the mental hospital because of you, don’t you think it’s time for you to divorce her? I don’t want to rush you, but don’t forget about the baby! People will see our baby as an illegitimate child if we’re not married!”

“I’ll definitely divorce her and marry you! Give me another three months! I’ll marry you after acquiring Dream Pharmaceutical!”

“Okay, dear!”

The recording then continued with obscene dialogues between the two.

Chapter 724 The Tables Have Turned 3

Once again, the crowd was rendered speechless.

It was not difficult to tell that the man in the recording was Thomas, and the woman was neither Jennie nor Yvonne. Instead, the female voice in the recording clearly belonged to a frivolous woman who indulged in debauchery.

Many years ago, rumors had it that Thomas admitted his wife to a mental hospital after the unexpected death of his daughter. To restore his image, he expressed his love and longing for his wife and his deceased daughter through writings.

With that, he successfully restored his reputation in no time. That was why the public no longer paid attention to the rumor anymore.

This recording instantly ruined his image as a loving husband.

At that moment, Thomas, who spoke with great confidence earlier, gaped in shock as he sat in the middle of the panel with words caught in his throat.

Once again, the journalists started questioning Thomas, “Mr. Nichols, who is that woman in the recording? Is she your mistress?”

“In the recording, you said you’ll marry her after acquiring Dream Pharmaceutical three months later. Is that true?”

“Didn’t you say you’ll spend the rest of your life with Ms. Fayze since she had been with you for the last two decades? But now you’re with this woman, and you even had a child with her. It seems you’re not practicing what you preached!”

A few other journalists continued to bombard him with more questions.

No one expected this turn of events in the press conference. The journalists had their eyes fixated on Thomas, hoping he could answer all their questions.

Right then, Yara got up from her seat. She seemed to be more shocked than angry. She had poured her blood, sweat, and tears into this, but everything that was happening right then was going against her will.

It is all Dad’s fault!

No wonder he looked suspicious and was hesitant to speak on the phone whenever I was around!

That is because the person he called was not his business partner but his mistress!

Hmph! He has finally shown his true colors!

The enraged Yara bit her lip so hard that it started to bleed.

She then heard a voice in her head. It's time to ditch him! Don't let him foil your perfect plan! You should focus on destroying Natalie and make sure she loses everything!

With that, Yara got onto the stage in her heels and snatched the microphone from the host.

"Ms. Nichols..." The host was stunned by her action.

However, Yara shot a fierce glare at the host, causing the latter to zip her mouth right away.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I'm just as shocked as all of you here when I heard these recordings. We'll definitely carry out an investigation to find out if those recordings were doctored, but I hope this will not distract us from the main issue discussed in this press conference!"

She continued, "I understand that Dexmed Pharmaceutical is not a perfect company. Rest assured that we'll address the problem accordingly. But the purpose of the press conference today is not to criticize Dexmed Pharmaceutical. Instead, we're here to talk about the death incidents Dream Corporation's special medicine has caused!"

Upon hearing that, the journalists came around and stopped questioning Thomas.

At that point, Thomas' sweat had drenched his handkerchief completely. He turned around and stared at Yara in frustration.

Yara, too, looked at Thomas, but there was a lack of sympathy in her eyes.

Chapter 725 The Tables Have Turned 4

Deep in his heart, Thomas knew his relationship with Yeva would be his Achilles' heel today.

He lowered his head and thought. Thank goodness Yara came out to divert the journalists' attention. Otherwise, I'd be cornered by these people.

Before Yara and Thomas could take a breather, someone got on stage, to their dismay.

Clad in a pair of overalls, the woman walked in with her hands in her pockets and a cap on her head.

She then gradually walked to the center of the stage. When the journalists turned their attention to her, she removed her cap, revealing her long silky hair that draped over her shoulders.

Even though she was barefaced, she still looked as stunning as ever, thanks to her fair complexion and exquisite features. The crowd at the press conference could not help but be in awe of her beauty.

But what stunned the crowd the most was the uncanny resemblance between that woman and Yara.

Despite having the same facial features and physique, this bare-faced woman exuded a more charming aura than Yara, who had heavy makeup on and wore pieces of luxurious jewelry. Although they were sisters, the latter was no match for the woman in terms of charisma and beauty.

Samuel finally saw the person he was eager to see. Instantly, love filled his eyes, and he could not stop smiling.

As he crossed his arms and cupped his chin, his eyes were filled with delight when he looked at the woman who made a sudden appearance on stage.

Samuel was constantly worried about her, but he knew she had always been a strong and independent woman. He also knew that every time she made an appearance after laying low for a period, she would always have the ability to stun the world.

My sweetheart is so gorgeous. I'm so proud of her.

"Who is she? Why does she look like Ms. Nichols?" One of the journalists looked confused.

At that moment, Yara's and Natalie's eyes finally met. As the former looked at her sister's facial features which were similar to hers yet better-looking, her heart was filled with conflicting emotions.

Nevertheless, Yara tried to contain her anxiety and stay composed. "How did you come back? How dare you make an appearance here? Don't you know what today's press conference is all about?"

Thomas had all along known that Natalie was not dead, but seeing her in person still stunned him. His jaw dropped the moment he saw Natalie on stage.

Upon noticing how thunderstruck Thomas and Yara were, Natalie casually picked up the microphone on the table and said, "I'm sure you can tell that we look alike, can't you? That's right. I'm Natalie Nichols, Yara's twin sister."

Natalie Nichols?

All the journalists were rendered speechless when they heard that.

"Another Natalie Nichols? How is that possible?"

"I know, right? Isn't that the name of Dream Corporation's chairwoman?"

"They look different, though, despite having the same name."

While the journalists were trying to make sense of what was going on, Natalie grinned and explained, "By the way, I'm also the chairwoman of Dream Corporation. Some of you might find it weird that I look different. The person who represented me in public was actually a good friend of mine because I couldn't appear in public due to some reasons."

Upon hearing that, the crowd gasped in shock once again.

All the journalists were overwhelmed by the multiple unexpected turns of events. They could come up with at least four pieces of news from this press conference alone.

Yara looked up at Natalie with a scowl. “Oh. So you finally have the guts to face the public, huh? Don’t you try to distract us from the deaths that the medicine from your company has caused with all your gimmicks! We’ll not forget the crime Dream Pharmaceutical has committed!”

Natalie retorted, “Every day, hundreds of thousands of cancer patients take our special medicine, and they’re all doing fine.” She squinted and continued, “But coincidentally, all the twenty-three death cases happened at Rayson Hospital.”

“And these are all cases of sudden death. It makes me wonder if they were actually caused by our medicine, or did the hospital intentionally admit patients that were on the brink of death into its institution to bump up the statistics?” she analyzed.

Chapter 726 The Tables Have Turned 5

Natalie stood under the spotlight with a microphone in her hand. Her words were so profound that they found their way into the crowd’s hearts.

“Before we hold Dream Pharmaceutical accountable, shouldn’t we first hold the hospital liable?” Natalie clicked on the presentation clicker and the screen flashed, showing another slide. “In the past few days, Dream has been shouldering the massive pressure of public outcry, but we have never considered stopping our production and sales.

She continued, “As the cost of this special medicine is many times cheaper than numerous other imported medicines, stopping the circulation will only burden patients and their families. For that reason, Dream had worked hard and cooperated with the authorities, but we didn’t expect that our competitors would use such underhanded methods to oppress Dream. From what I heard from the authorities, they still couldn’t determine if there was indeed an issue with Dream’s special medicine, but I supposed everyone has heard the recordings played earlier. I believe all of you are able to make your own judgment.”

Natalie met Yara’s gaze once she finished her speech.

After catching the delight in Natalie’s gaze, Yara clenched her teeth.

She did it on purpose. She chose to spring this on us when we were in the limelight as she knew the impact would be devastating for us.

“You—”

“Since we’re blood-related, I’ll give you some advice.” A gleam flashed across Natalie’s eyes as she said, “Give a thief enough rope, and he’ll hang himself.”

“You...”

After that, Natalie returned her gaze to the reporters and cameras and bowed deeply.

Without any hesitation, she confidently strutted out of the venue.

The media saw the opportunity and immediately carried their equipment, eager to chase after her.

However, a noble and elegant figure slowly got up from his seat at that moment. When Natalie was in his vicinity, he reached out to grab her hand and wrapped his other arm over her shoulder, forming a protective barrier around her from the outside world.

Natalie's mind had been actively planning her next strategy the whole time, so she didn't notice that he had come to the venue. Disbelief filled her eyes when she looked up and saw his face. The belated realization that he was there the whole time and his current stance were another shock to her system.

"S-Samuel, why are you—"

"Let's talk when we get back."

Samuel was exuding his usual cold vibe in front of the public.

His deep-set features, dark eyes, and black trench coat gave him an unapproachable aura, serving as a deterrent to the vulture-like reporters.

Those reporters had the guts to mess with Natalie but not Samuel, so their chase came to a stop when they saw him taking her under his wing. Anyone with working eyes could see that they would be gone from the news industry the next day had they continued to follow and pester Natalie for an interview.

Seeing Samuel leaving with Natalie in tow, the reporters turned their attention to Saunder, Thomas, and Yara.

"Mr. Todd, is the recording legitimate?"

"Mr. Nichols, please elaborate further on your words earlier about how making medicine is akin to how one conducts oneself. Your private life is a mess. Does that reflect on the quality of the medicine Dexmed Pharmaceutical makes?"

"Natalie is your daughter, but she doesn't seem to acknowledge you as her father and has even become your strongest competitor. Is your ex-wife the cause of your horrible relationship? There was a rumor circulating that your current wife, Yvonne, was once your mistress. Please share your opinion on this matter."

A barrage of questions hit them like a tonne of brick.

Saunder had thought the press conference was held in his favor. However, judging from the current situation, he could not help but feel that Thomas and Yara had dragged him down with them. Filled with rage, he threw a bottle of water onto the ground and stomped away from the venue, leaving Thomas and Yara to clean up the mess.

At that moment, Yara felt her head hurt so much that it could explode at any moment.

Natalie was so close to falling into the abyss, yet, she still managed to pluck herself out of the murky waters. She even elevated Dream's reputation. Failed! I have failed terribly!

The reporters persistently pushed their microphones into her face with snarky questions.

The clamoring crowd is making me claustrophobic. I might die if this goes on. At that thought, she shut her eyes and slumped to the floor.

Chapter 728 Pamper

“I was thinking that rumors are just rumors. They’re not credible at all.” Natalie stared at Samuel with bright eyes.

Samuel was toying with her hand as he questioned, “What kind of rumors?”

“You being cold and celibate and how you stay away from women...” Natalie blabbed every rumor she had ever heard about him. “I bet those who spread the rumors would get the shock of their lives if they could see you like this.”

Samuel chuckled as he leaned closer to her ear and whispered, “Those people weren’t wrong. I’m only like this now because I’m with you. I don’t have any interest in other women.”

This girl has the innocence of a young girl, yet sometimes, she has a dominant temperament that can rule the world. There are times when she’s cunning, and there are also times when she’s aloof. She’s like a treasure that is full of surprises every day.

I’m lucky to have met her before Shawn, Christopher, and Nikolai did. Otherwise, my life would’ve been filled with regret if I had lost such a precious treasure.

He had watched Natalie returning barb for barb at the news conference from the beginning to the end. However, he was curious as to how she did it.

“How did you get the recording?”

“It was nothing.” Natalie smiled. “I just used some tricks. I put the recorder on Thomas to catch him in his act. If he is as dumb as I think, he might still be clueless as to where I got the recording from.”

Samuel looked at Natalie with shining eyes as he brushed her nose proudly. “I was more or less worried for you before the press conference, but it looks like I underestimated you.”

Natalie nodded.

She still had a few regrets from the press conference, such as the matter involving the drug molecule she got from Melissa’s blood and other patients. At that time, she didn’t reveal any of it for fear that it would set off turmoil in Chanaea.

That also meant she couldn’t exact the befitting punishment onto Thomas and Yara.

At most, the press conference had only tarnished Thomas’ and Dexmed Pharmaceutical’s image, bringing down Dexmed Pharmaceutical from its glory. However, it wasn’t enough to damage its core.

After that confrontation, I’m sure there’ll be obstacles down the path waiting for Dream and me. However, before I brave that storm, I’m going to enjoy the peace first.

Natalie’s tense body could finally relax. She gently snuggled against his chest like a languid kitten and soon fell asleep.

“Nat, what do you want for dinner tonight?” Samuel asked softly.

Natalie's curled lashes twitched slightly as her nostrils expanded and constricted from her even breathing.

Upon lowering his head, Samuel noticed the dark circles under her eyes. He knew she had been shouldering a lot of burden and responsibility as she faced Dream's financial crisis and the pressuring public opinion.

Yet, she didn't shed a single tear as she faced all those difficulties and didn't blame anyone. She merely carried everything on her shoulder silently.

She's exactly like the old me.

Hence, he understood the pain she felt. It was a feeling that not many could bear, so his heart ached for her all the more.

Samuel gently laid her head against his shoulder so that she could sleep more comfortably.

When Billy stopped the car and was about to open the back passenger door, he caught Samuel's gesture for him to keep silent. Catching on to Samuel's intention, Billy sensibly moved away from the car and allowed Natalie to continue her rest.

That went on until dusk.

Natalie was finally feeling better after the nap. When she opened her eyes, she realized she had been leaning on Samuel's shoulder the entire time. With a glimpse at the window, she noticed that the sky had turned dark.

"How's your nap?"

"I-I think I napped for quite a while." Natalie bit her lip guiltily and looked at his shoulder. "You could have woken me up. How's your shoulder? Is it numb?"

Chapter 727 Hot And Cold

Yara's body hit the floor with a loud thud.

Thomas took that opportunity to dash to her side. "Yara, are you okay?"

However, Yara continued to keep her eyes shut and did not answer him.

"Stop asking and make some space! My daughter can't breathe with all of you hovering so close over her!" Thomas blamed the crowd and yelled, "I'm going to send her to the hospital. If you continue to pester us and something bad happens to my daughter, I'll hunt all of you down."

Having said that, Thomas beckoned his subordinate over to carry Yara and swiftly raced out of the venue together.

The reporters were disappointed that they couldn't get any interviews from Thomas and Yara. Despite that, the reporters managed to obtain plenty of shocking and newsworthy information from the press conference, so they quickly dispersed, each racing back, eager to be the first to release the breaking news.

By then, the news conference venue was a chaotic mess.

Meanwhile, Samuel had brought Natalie to a small storeroom beside the venue.

There weren't a lot of boxes and sundries in the storeroom, but the narrow room felt smaller with all the items.

"Sam—"

Before she could get the rest of the word out, Samuel slammed his lips against hers, swallowing her words.

Natalie's eyes widened as she stared at the man kissing her like a ferocious beast.

So he took me here instead of leaving to kiss me? How shameless!

Natalie wanted to push Samuel away, but he grasped her hands and held them against the cold, hard wall, intimately interlacing his fingers with hers. With her back against the wall, she had nowhere to escape and could only let Samuel wantonly kiss her.

When the situation was about to lose control, Natalie's eyes became misty, and she was making soft pleading sounds like little critters after getting caught.

"W-What's gotten into you?"

"You one-sidedly decided to break up with me. Have you not considered my feelings at all?" Samuel asked with an arched brow. His eyes were filled with unsatisfied lust.

"I..." After contemplating briefly, she slowly said, "I did consider your feelings, but there were just so many things waiting for me to do."

Her teary eyes had captivated him. This woman is the calamity that I can never run away from. She can still speak to me so calmly, whereas I'm going crazy from my longing and lust for her.

Slightly mad at her inconsideration, Samuel lightly bit her swollen lips as revenge, then released her.

"Let's go home."

"Okay."

Samuel cast a serious look at her. "We'll continue where we left off after we get back."

Natalie couldn't manage a retort, so she feigned deaf instead.

Samuel held Natalie's small hand as they left the storeroom and strode to his Hummer.

After Billy got in the driver's seat at the front, he sensibly raised the partition between the front and back seats, separating him from them.

Displeased that Natalie sat so far away from him, Samuel narrowed his eyes at her.

"Scooch over," Samuel demanded.

"Hmm?"

Natalie's mind was foggy from lack of sleep, so she couldn't hear Samuel's demand.

Samuel was fed up with not having her by his side. Throwing his care out of the window, he swung his arm over her soft body and pulled her to lie against his chest.

Natalie could feel the tremendous force he was exerting. It was as though he wanted to knead her into his body, becoming one with him.

"It hurts."

The soft whine had Samuel releasing his hold slightly.

Natalie couldn't help curling her lips into a smile as she looked up at the man who was cold as ice in public yet hot as fire when he was alone with her.

Samuel asked, "What's so funny?"

Chapter 729 Inherited From Daddy

Natalie's eyes were still half-mast from having just woken from a deep sleep, and her sweet, gentle voice was tickling Samuel's ear.

Instead of answering Natalie, he repeated his question, "I asked how your nap was?"

"Comfortable." Natalie nodded as she responded unguardedly.

"My shoulder is numb from acting as a pillow for you, so you better perform well in bed tonight until I'm satisfied." He turned to her, staring into her eyes with a burning gaze.

Natalie just wanted to offer to massage his shoulder earlier, but he took it the wrong way, and the entire conversation had swerved to PG 18.

Lifting her eyes to meet his dark ones, she could read the depth of his longing for her. That infatuation was on the borderline of paranoia and unhealthy obsession.

His fiery gaze seared her, causing her heart to pound fervently. She realized belatedly that she had already mumbled a soft "yes" when she snapped out of her daze.

After that, they both got out of the car, and Samuel habitually reached for her hand as they walked back to the Bowers residence.

Gavin hadn't seen Natalie for the past few days, so he was glad when she came back. He greeted her with a kind smile, "Ms. Natalie, you've finally returned."

"Thank you for taking care of the kids during my absence," Natalie said, returning a friendly smile.

"You don't have to thank me for it. It's part of my job."

At that moment, four chubby kids exchanged glances when they heard Natalie's and Gavin's voices. Realizing that Natalie was back, they raced to her side.

"Mommy!"

"Mommy!"

“Mommy!”

The kids reached her side in no time, and she became the attention of the four children with cute, chubby faces and dark, big eyes. The sight had filled Natalie’s empty heart with warmth.

“Franklin! Xavian! Clayton and Sophia!”

Natalie dropped to her knees and looked at the kids with red rims around her eyes.

She had kept her longing for the kids on a tight leash due to her busy work, but the second she saw them, the leash loosened, bringing tears to her eyes. I missed them so much too.

Clayton said, “Mommy, you’re so thin now.”

“Mommy, you worked too hard. If Daddy doesn’t want to support you, I can,” Xavian said with pouting lips.

Franklin shot Samuel a disgusted glance. “Daddy, if you can’t take care of Mommy, the four of us can.”

“That’s right!” Sophia pitched in, “I didn’t spend any money that all the uncles gifted me. I can give everything to Mommy.”

Natalie hadn’t even said a word, and Samuel was already on the receiving end of the kids’ despise.

Samuel watched as the kids surrounded Natalie, feeling resigned at the remarks they threw at him. He thought it was funny that the kids had different characters and features but inherited the same thing from him.

Their love for Natalie must have been engraved in their DNA. All five of us Bowers can twist the facts for Natalie’s sake.

Seeing the kids being so protective of her, Natalie was touched but figured she still needed to clear Samuel’s name. “I was just a bit tied up at work, so I couldn’t have my meals on time. Now that I’m back, I’ll regain my weight after a few hearty meals. As for you guys, did you finish your homework and behave yourselves when I wasn’t around?”

“We did!” the kids chorused immediately.

Worried that Natalie would want to check the kids’ homework, Samuel quickly cut in, “Gavin has prepared dinner. Let’s have dinner first.”

Chapter 730 Taking The Lead

Samuel lowered his head and ate quietly as they sat around the dining table. Meanwhile, the four children kept coming up with different topics to chat about with Natalie.

Although he did not say a word, his eyes were fixed on her face.

Several strands of her soft bangs fell forward and brushed lightly against her cheek as she listened earnestly to the children’s banter. Whenever they said something funny, she would laugh along with them, and her almond-shaped eyes would curve into two crescents.

He felt a genuine sense of peace and contentment as he gazed at the scene before him.

When Natalie turned toward Samuel and realized he had been looking at her the whole time, she felt somewhat self-conscious. "I... Why do you keep staring at me? You should eat."

"Okay," he murmured, not revealing that he thought she was a feast for the eyes.

The four children clamored around Natalie after dinner, asking her to check their homework. In truth, it was so that they could spend more time with their mother.

Samuel was indeed a little disgruntled. After all, he only just got to see Natalie as well, so he selfishly wanted to have her to himself for a while. However, he could only watch helplessly after she shot him a glance, telling him not to fight with the children for her attention. Hence, he stepped outside to let the cool evening breeze calm his restlessness before returning to his study to continue working.

It was ten o'clock at night by the time the children finally washed up and went to bed at Natalie's urging.

Massaging her sore shoulders, Natalie was ready to go to her bedroom and turn in for the night. But as soon as she opened the door, she felt a warm touch on her wrist before she was led into the room.

"Samuel, you..." Natalie began.

In the blink of an eye, an arm circled her slender waist and pulled her behind the door.

"What's the matter?"

"I'm hungry." Samuel's eyes were as dark as a bottomless abyss.

"Really?" Natalie swallowed hard. Feigning ignorance, she continued, "You barely ate during dinner, so it's no wonder you're hungry. Why don't I ask Gavin to prepare some supper for you?"

She knew full well what he was hungry for at that moment, but the memory of their kiss in the storage room frightened her a little.

This man... He's like a vicious wolf that was locked up in a cage for days without food and water and is finally released. And here I am, like a rabbit wandering into the wolf's den. If he were to satiate his hunger in that starving state, there'd be nothing left of me!

However, her attempt at distracting him and escaping from his clutches proved unsuccessful.

Instead of kissing her on the lips, she felt him press his lips against her neck. Heat rose within her as he enveloped her in his strong, masculine aura.

It tickles...

"Don't..." she moaned.

"Are you going to brush me off again?" Samuel grasped Natalie's chin, forcing her to meet his gaze.

"When did I try to brush you off?" she protested in an attempt to explain herself.

He arched an eyebrow. "Weren't you? If you want to prove that you weren't trying to brush me off, go on and take the lead. Put your arm around my waist and kiss me."

Upon hearing his words, her face flushed scarlet, and her eyelashes trembled. She stood rooted to the spot, not daring to move even an inch. That request of his... Isn't it a little too embarrassing? I have to put my arm around his waist... and initiate a kiss?

Seeing that she made no movement, he nibbled her earlobe and said devilishly, "Who said she wanted to make it up to me? If you're shy, I... can take the lead..."

His words rendered her speechless.

What on earth is he saying? He really does have a talent for killing a conversation.

She glared at him fiercely, but his eyes were ablaze with his desire for her. Since she refused to take the lead, he would do it.

Lifting Natalie in his arms, Samuel pressed her up against the door, parted her legs, and wrapped them around his waist. Then, he leaned in toward her luscious lips and kissed her passionately.